New Era REVIEW

BRITISH COLUMBIA

June 2001 to May 2003

23 Months Of Action - New Era Promises Made And Kept

The government was sworn into office on June 5, 2001, with a four-year mandate to build a New Era of hope and prosperity for all British Columbians. It was a mandate for change and renewal, based on a platform of 201 specific commitments that the government promised to undertake.

Twenty-three months into its term, the government has now completed or begun work on 90 per cent of those New Era commitments - 180 priorities fulfilled or underway as the government works to revitalize the economy, restore sound fiscal management, and put patients, students and people first.

In some cases, the actions taken to date are only the first steps towards completion of ongoing commitments. Over the next two years, the government will continue work on these initiatives, as well as the remaining 10 per cent of its commitments. The following is a summary of the progress made to date.

The "90 Day" ***Agenda:***

✔ ***Introduce a dramatic cut in personal income taxes, within 90 days.***	***Done.*** Income tax cuts averaging 25 per cent were fully implemented in January 2002, providing the lowest rates of personal income tax in Canada on the first $60,000 of income.
✔ ***Pass real Balanced Budget legislation, to make balanced budgets mandatory by our third full budget and to hold all ministers individually accountable.***	***Done.*** Under the *Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act*, passed in August 2001, 20% of Ministers' salaries is withheld pending compliance with Ministry and government budget projections.
✔ ***Pass real Truth in budgeting legislation that ensures all provincial finances are fully, accurately and honestly reported under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.***	***Done.*** The *Budget Transparency and Accountability Amendment Act* was passed in August 2001.
✔ ***Restore education as an essential service under the Labour Code to ensure that no child's right to an education is denied during school strikes and lockouts.***	***Done,*** under the *Skills Development and Labour Statutes Amendment Act*, passed in August 2001.
✔ ***Pass Merit Employment legislation, to restore a professional, non-partisan public service, appointed strictly on merit and not on patronage*** ***Restore a professional, non-partisan public service, based on merit – not patronage.***	***Done.*** Legislation passed in August 2001 strengthens merit-based recruitment by establishing a Merit Commissioner – appointed by unanimous recommendation from a special legislative committee – to audit hirings and report directly to the Legislature.
✔ ***Establish a "Waste Buster" Website for taxpayers to help identify, report and stamp out government waste.***	***Done.*** The website went on-line in August 2001.

✔ ***Restore workers' democratic right to a secret ballot vote on certification under the Labour Code and ensure the same rules apply for certification as de-certification.***	***Done,*** under the *Skills Development and Labour Statutes Amendment Act*, passed in August 2001.
✔ ***Restore all workers' right to negotiate contracts by outlawing sectoral bargaining.***	***Done,*** under the *Skills Development and Labour Statutes Amendment Act*, passed August 2001.
✔ ***Restore open tendering on government contracts to allow fair competition for businesses and provide better value to taxpayers.***	***Done,*** in open Cabinet, July 2001.
✔ ***Appoint an independent task force to review the options, models, costs and effectiveness of private sector pay equity legislation, and make recommendations to the Legislature.***	***Done.*** The task force reported to the Legislature in February 2002.
✔ ***Eliminate the HCL union-only "hiring hall" requirement on highway construction projects and government-sponsored silviculture contracts.***	***Done,*** in open Cabinet, July 2001.
✔ ***Eliminate government subsidies to businesses that give some companies an unfair advantage over their competitors.***	***Done.*** The Industrial Development Incentive Fund was reduced by $100 million to prohibit any new loans; 22 other government subsidy programs were eliminated in January 2002.
✔ ***Pass a Community Charter to outlaw provincial government "offloading" of costs onto municipal governments, and to give local governments greater autonomy and better planning tools to reduce pressure on property taxes.***	***Underway.*** The new *Community Charter* was introduced in the Legislature March 11, 2003.
✔ ***Appoint an independent public inquiry into the fast ferry fiasco and the mismanagement of BC Ferries.***	***Done.*** The review was completed December 2001, and a new structure for BC Ferries announced in November 2002.
✔ ***Ensure that Crown corporations are subject to local zoning and land-use by-laws.***	***Underway.*** Crown corporations have been advised to honour the policy, and a cross-government working group has been established to formally implement it.
✔ ***Scrap photo radar, to put police officers back on the street, enforcing traffic safety.***	***Done.*** The photo radar program ended in June 2001.
✔ ***Establish a fixed provincial election date under the BC Constitution Act, to ensure provincial elections must be held on a fixed date every fourth year, or immediately if any government loses a confidence vote in the Legislature.***	***Done.*** Under the *Constitution (Fixed Election Dates) Amendment Act*, passed in August 2001, the next election is scheduled for May 17, 2005.
✔ ***Establish a fixed date for the tabling of the provincial budget, and a set legislative calendar.***	***Done.*** The *Budget Transparency and Accountability Amendment Act* establishes the third Tuesday in February as budget day. The government has also established a set calendar for sittings of the Legislature.
✔ ***Establish a new Premier's Council on Technology to help bridge the "digital divide" and recommend strategies to enable all British Columbians to participate in and benefit from increased jobs and opportunities in the new economy.***	***Done.*** The Premier's Technology Council has released three detailed reports, and is developing strategies to make BC one of the world's top 10 technology centres by 2006.

✔ ***Repeal the NDP's "fixed wage" legislation that has added huge costs to taxpayers on public construction projects.***	***Done.*** The *Skills Development and Fair Wage Repeal Act* was passed in August 2001.
✔ ***Restore workers' right to their pensions by repealing the law that allows some pension plans to suspend pension benefits for early retirees who choose to continue working in their previous field of employment.***	***Done,*** under the *Skills Development and Labour Statutes Amendment Act*, passed August 2001.
✔ ***Conduct a comprehensive audit of the Province's finances within 90 days and make the results public.***	***Done.*** The independent financial review, completed in July 2001, identified a $3.8 billion structural deficit that must be addressed through measures to control spending and revitalize growth.

A New Era of **Higher Paycheques:**

✔ ***Cut the base personal income tax rate to the lowest rate of any province in Canada for the bottom two tax brackets, on the first $60,000 of income, within our first term.*** ***Honour this commitment without cutting funding for health or education.***	***Done.***

A New Era of **Accountability:**

✔ ***Honestly balance the budget, without cutting funding for health care or education.***	***Underway and on track.*** The government has passed a legislated deadline to balance the budget by February 2004. Funding for health has increased by $1.1 billion, and education spending is being increased by $143 million over the next three years.
✔ ***Increase funding for the Auditor General's Office, to help identify and prevent waste, and to increase value-for-money.***	***Done.*** Funding has increased by 20 per cent from $6.6 million to $7.9 million in Budget 2003.
✔ ***Eliminate the use of Special Warrants, to prevent government from spending your money without prior legislative approval.***	***Done,*** under the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Amendment Act*, passed in August 2001.
✔ ***Establish service plans that include measurable performance standards and targets for all programs that are annually audited and published, for all taxpayers to see.***	***Done.*** Three-year Ministry service plans were released in February 2002, with the government's first provincial budget.
✔ ***Require Crown corporations to be directly accountable to a committee of the Legislature for their financial management and budget plans.***	***Done.*** The Select Standing Committee on Crown Corporations was activated in August 2001, and is responsible for reviewing Crown corporations.

A New Era of **Hope:**

✔ ***Protect private property rights to prevent government from expropriating assets without fair compensation.***	***Ongoing.*** The *Protected Areas Forests Compensation Act*, passed in May 2002, ensures compensation for the establishment of parks and protected areas. Legislation was passed in May 2002 to provide a settlement with Carrier Lumber.
✔ ***Modernize the Residential Tenancy Act to properly protect renters and landlords in plain language everyone can understand.***	***Done.*** The new *Residential Tenancy Act* was passed in November 2002.

✔ ***Restore an independent BC Utilities Commission, to re-regulate BC Hydro's electricity rates.***	***Done.*** Under the government's new Energy Plan, BC Hydro rates will be re-regulated under the BC Utilities Commission, effective March 31, 2003.
✔ ***Establish regional transportation authorities that are accountable to local taxpayers and give local communities more control over their transportation needs and planning.***	***Underway.*** Regional Transportation Advisory Committees are being set up to advise the government of regional transportation priorities and will provide input on how regional authorities can potentially be structured.
✔ ***Require taxpayer approval by regional referendums prior to authorization of any new type of TransLink tax or levy.***	***Ongoing.*** No new types of taxes have been approved.
✔ ***Not sell or privatize BC Rail.***	***Done.*** BC Rail has not been sold or privatized.
✔ ***Protect BC Hydro and all of its core assets, including dams, reservoirs and power lines under public ownership.***	***Done.*** Under the government's new Energy Plan, BC Hydro and its core assets have been protected under public ownership.
✔ ***Designate BC Ferry routes as an essential service, to ensure that water transportation routes are not shut down by labour disputes.***	***Done.*** Coastal Ferry Act passed March 27, 2003, enshrines guaranteed service levels in legislation.
✔ ***Introduce greater competition in auto insurance, to create increased choice and reduce motor vehicle premiums.***	***Underway.*** Under changes announced in November 2002, the government will establish an independent, arms-length regulator to improve choice and competition in the optional insurance market.
✔ ***Implement a flexible, innovative program to increase the supply of affordable housing.***	***Underway.*** Over 2,200 new units of non-profit housing have been completed since June 2001, built in cooperation with non-profit, community, municipal and federal partners.
✔ ***Focus resources on improving northern and rural transportation.***	***Done.*** In 2002-03, $10 million was added for northern and rural roads, and $20 million budgeted for an oil and gas initiative for resource roads. The $609 heartlands road strategy announced in Budget 2003 includes $210 million for northern and rural roads, and $37 million for oil and gas roads.

A New Era of ***Prosperity:***

✔ ***Cut the "red tape" and regulatory burden by 1/3 within three years.***	***Underway.*** The net reduction in regulatory requirements is 50,121 as of the Mar. 31, 2003 first quarter report, gross reduction is 61,942.
✔ ***Make the Workers' Compensation Board more responsive to workers' and employers' needs.***	***Ongoing.*** Reforms to improve the appeals process were passed in October 2002, and a new board appointed in December 2002. A new Workers Compensation Appeal Tribunal was in place March 1, 2003 to provide fair and timely final appeals.
✔ ***Increase access to Crown lands and resources, to create jobs in tourism, mining, forestry, farming, ranching, and oil & gas.***	***Ongoing.*** A maximum of 140 days has been set to process applications. An integrated agency, Land and Water BC, was created in February 2002 to coordinate land and water applications. Amendments to the *Oil and Gas Commission Act*, passed in May 2002, streamline permitting and application reviews.
✔ ***Phase out taxes on investment and productivity to stimulate economic growth and job creation, in keeping with our commitment to balance the budget and protect health care and education funding.***	***Done.*** The provincial sales tax was eliminated on production machinery and equipment bought by eligible manufacturers, and by logging, mining and energy businesses, in July 2001. The corporate capital tax rate on non-financial institutions was eliminated September 2002.

✔ ***Stimulate tourism with a plan to improve operators' ability to successfully compete for visitors from around the world.***	***Ongoing.*** The province has partnered with the federal government and the private-sector on the $495-million expansion of the Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre, and is launching a new B.C. Resort Task Force to promote B.C.'s four-season resorts. The government has provided $1.25 million to help Tourism BC and regional tourism associations market B.C. internationally.
✔ ***Aggressively support and champion British Columbia's bid to host the 2010 Winter Olympics.***	***Ongoing.*** The government will commit $600 million for a successful 2010 bid – $310 million for venues, $87.5 million for security and a $200-million contingency.
✔ ***Eliminate the backlog and delays in Crown land applications, which have cost over $1 billion and 20,000 lost jobs.***	***Done.*** The backlog of 1,536 Crown land applications has been eliminated. Delays addressed by redesigning and simplifying application process, cutting processing time in half.
✔ ***Encourage mineral exploration, which has dropped by 80% under the NDP.***	***Ongoing.*** A 20% flow-through share credit was implemented in July 2001 to encourage mineral exploration. This has now been extended to 2006, with a commitment to match any extension of the federal flow-through tax credit. Amendments to the *Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Act, Coal Act, Mines Act* and *Mineral Tenure Act* were passed in May 2002 to streamline regulations.
✔ ***Consider the Northern Development Commissioner's forthcoming report on offshore oil & gas.***	***Done.*** A scientific review panel report was released in May 2002. $2 million has been provided to the University of Northern BC for technological research, and preparation of a provincial work plan.
✔ ***Make the Agricultural Land Commission more regionally responsive to community needs.***	***Done.*** The *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, passed in May 2002, establishes a new structure, and six regional panels.

A New Era of ***Employment:***

✔ ***Give workers and employers greater flexibility in Employment Standards to negotiate mutually beneficial relationships that help them compete and prosper.***	***Done.*** Amendments to the Employment Standards Act, passed in May 2002, allow workers to negotiate more flexible work schedules, and impose the strongest mandatory penalties in Canada.
✔ ***Focus on reducing BC's youth unemployment, which is the worst of any province west of Quebec.***	***Ongoing.*** A first-job wage has been implemented to help create new jobs for youth entering the workforce. In 2002, the number of youth working grew by 7,900 jobs.
✔ ***Work with employers, post-secondary institutes and the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission to increase training and apprenticeships in trades and technical sectors.***	***Underway.*** An industry advisory committee was appointed to develop a new model to replace the Commission. Sixteen pilot projects have been announced, and legislation for the new model is expected in the spring session.

A New Era of ***Sustainable Forestry:***

✔ ***Establish a working forest land base, to provide greater stability for working families and to enhance long-term forestry management and planning.***	***Underway.*** A discussion paper was released January 22, 2003 and public comments are being accepted until April 30, 2003.
✔ ***Streamline the Forest Practices Code to establish a workable, results-based Code, with tough penalties for non-compliance.***	***Done.*** The new *Forest and Range Practices Act* was passed in November 2002.
✔ ***Cut the forestry regulatory burden by one-third, within three years, without compromising environmental standards.***	***Underway.*** Amendments have been passed to streamline provisions in the *Forests Act*, and regulations will be streamlined under the new *Forest and Range Practices Act*.

✔ ***Apply 1% of all direct forest revenues, not including "super stumpage," to global marketing of BC's forest practices and products.***	***Done.*** The $20 million product development and international marketing fund was established in March 2002.
✔ ***Create a market-based stumpage system that reflects global market realities and local harvesting costs.***	***Underway.*** Under the forestry revitalization plan announced Mar. 26, 2003, the government will move towards a new timber pricing system that will give British Columbians fair value for the use of their public forests.
✔ ***Either fix or scrap Forest Renewal BC, starting by removing the political appointees on the Board.***	***Done.*** A new Forest Investment Account has been established, to focus resources on land-based activities, marketing and value-added growth.
✔ ***Invest in research to promote forest stewardship.***	***Done.*** $20 million has been allocated under the new Forest Investment Account.
✔ ***Protect private property rights in treaty negotiations.***	***Ongoing.*** Private property rights are protected under the publicly-endorsed principles for treaty negotiations.
✔ ***Work to expedite interim measures agreements with First Nations, to provide greater certainty during treaty talks.***	***Ongoing.*** The government entered into 47 interim measures in its first year, representing an investment of $3.6 million. Under the $40-million Economic Measures Fund, 111 projects have also been approved worth $25 million.
✔ ***Increase the Allowable Annual Cut over time through scientific forest management, proper planning, and incentives to promote enhanced silviculture.***	***Underway.*** The annual allowable cut has increased since June 2001 to address the mountain pine beetle, and a new Forest Investment Account established to improve forest management.
✔ ***Eliminate "waterbedding."***	***Underway.*** Implementation of a new auction-based system for selling Crown timber under the new forestry revitalization plan is a step towards eliminating "waterbedding."

A New Era of ***Environmental Stewardship:***

✔ ***Adopt a scientifically-based, principled approach to environmental management that ensures sustainability, accountability and responsibility.***	***Ongoing.*** A new Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management has been established, sustainability principles have been adopted for major policy initiatives, regional moratoriums on grizzly bear hunting have been implemented, and new regulations put in place for salmon aquaculture to provide the most comprehensive environmental protection framework in the world.
✔ ***Pass real comprehensive ground water legislation to improve the quality of British Columbians' drinking water.***	***Done,*** under the *Drinking Water Protection Amendment Act*, passed in October 2002.
✔ ***Oppose the Sumas 2 power project and phase out Burrard Thermal.***	***Ongoing.*** The government continues to oppose the Sumas 2 project, as intervener in hearings before the National Energy Board. The government's new Energy Plan furthers the goal of phasing out Burrard Thermal.
✔ ***Ensure mining or logging is not permitted in parks.***	***Ongoing.*** Amendments to the *Mineral Tenure Act*, passed in May 2002, create a two-zone system that clearly defines parks, ecological reserves and protected heritage property as closed to mining.
✔ ***Work to develop an internationally accepted standard for "eco-labelling" of BC forest products.***	***Underway.*** Almost all major forest companies now comply with one or more international standards. The government is continuing to work with industry, as part of its Forestry Revitalization Plan.
✔ ***Maintain the longstanding ban on bulk water exports.***	***Done.*** The ban has been maintained.

✔ ***Replace the NDP's blanket moratorium on grizzly bear hunting with a proper peer review by scientists and biologists, and local moratoriums where grizzly populations are endangered.***	***Done.*** The blanket moratorium was replaced in July 2001 with regional moratoriums, and proper peer review by scientists and biologists.
✔ ***Ensure that major capital spending decisions and land-use decisions involving the Agricultural Land Reserve, new parks, land claims and tenure reform are decided by Cabinet in public, and not behind closed doors.***	***Ongoing.*** Cabinet has made policy decisions publicly on new parks, the Agricultural Land Reserve, the Nisga'a Highway and Lions Gate Bridge projects.
✔ ***Promote clean and renewable alternative energy sources, like wind, thermal, solar, tidal, biomass and fuel cell technologies.***	***Ongoing.*** Purchase agreements were signed in January 2002 for 18 renewable energy projects, and the government's new Energy Plan is focused on increasing alternative energy.

A New Era of **Connectivity:**

✔ ***Work to extend high-speed, broad-band Internet access to every community in BC through wireless technology, cable, phone lines and fibre optics.***	***Underway.*** The Premier's Technology Council has provided recommendations for how to proceed, and the province is evaluating opportunities for pilot projects.

A New Era for **Knowledge Workers:**

✔ ***Work with the federal government to ensure that our tax treatment of stock options and capital gains is globally competitive.***	***Done.*** Lower personal income tax rates (provincial and federal) and reduced inclusion rate for capital gains brought down the tax rate on stock options from 38.5% in 2000 to 21.9% in 2002. Federal changes that delay the time when the tax is triggered on stock options have made the tax treatment of stock options in B.C. competitive to other jurisdictions in Canada and the U.S.
✔ ***Lead annual international 'Leading Edge' marketing missions to promote BC technology and investment.***	***Ongoing.*** The first Leading Edge marketing mission was to California in November 2002.
✔ ***Restore BC as a world leader in E-government, to give all citizens and businesses better on-line access to core services, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.***	***Underway.*** A new government Enterprise Portal is under development. Community access terminals have now been installed in all 58 government agent offices. The *Registry Statutes Amendment Act*, passed in April 2002, provides for on-line filing of forms and documents, and reduces costs associated with paper filing. E-filing changes have also been made to the *Mineral Tenure Act*, *Petroleum and Natural Gas Act* and *Motor Vehicle Act*.
✔ ***Use on-line procurement technology to save costs and maximize taxpayers' value-for-money on all major government purchases.***	***Ongoing.*** The *Procurement Services Act* introduced in March 2003 ensures government obtains the best value for its purchases.
✔ ***Cut the cost of paper flow by digitizing all government data, forms and information possible.***	***Ongoing.*** The *Registry Statutes Amendment Act*, passed in April 2002, provides for on-line filing of forms and documents, and reduces costs associated with paper filing. E-filing changes have also been made to the *Mineral Tenure Act*, *Petroleum and Natural Gas Act* and *Motor Vehicle Act*.
✔ ***Double the annual number of graduates in computer science, and electrical and computer engineering, within five years.***	***Underway.*** 825 new spaces were created in 2002-03, and $150 million invested over five years to double the number of graduates to 1,760.
✔ ***Increase investment in technology research and post-secondary skills and training.***	***Ongoing.*** The government launched a $45 million Leading Edge Endowment Fund in April 2002. $7.5-million B.C. regional innovation chairs program announced in February 2003.

A New Era for **Students:**

✔ ***Maintain and increase education funding levels by increasing revenues through economic growth.***	***Done.*** The annual budget for the Ministry of Education will increase by $143 million by 2005-06.
✔ ***Establish specific goals and outcomes to measure the success of educators in public schooling.***	***Underway.*** New accountability contracts have been established, and School Planning Councils are responsible for developing an annual plan for each school, including goals and outcomes for improvement.
✔ ***Devote more of each education dollar to improving the quality of education, and less to bureaucracy.***	***Ongoing.*** Ministry savings were passed on to districts through one-time grants of $44.6 million in 2001-02, and $50 million in 2002-03. A new, simplified funding formula gives school districts the flexibility to allocate funding to meet the needs of their students.
✔ ***Support more flexibility and choice in public schooling.***	***Ongoing.*** Amendments to the *School Act* give students the choice to attend any school in the province, provided space is available, while requiring districts to create catchment areas to ensure students can attend their neighbourhood schools.
✔ ***Give local school boards more autonomy and control over the delivery of education services, subject to provincial curriculum and testing standards.***	***Done.*** The new funding formula reduces the number of funding categories from 60 to six, and removes prescriptive criteria for how much districts must spend in each area, giving them the flexibility to allocate funds to meet the unique needs of their students.
✔ ***Give school boards multi-year funding envelopes, to improve long-term education planning and budgeting.***	***Done.*** Three-year funding envelopes were provided with Budget 2002 in February.
✔ ***Work with educators and employers to expand job training and skills development opportunities.***	***Underway.*** 16 pilot projects have been launched. A new model is being developed, based on a publicly released discussion paper, and will be finalized this session.
✔ ***Maintain current funding arrangements for independent schools.***	***Done.***
✔ ***Eliminate the PST on basic school supplies purchased by Parent Advisory Councils, which volunteer their time and effort to raise money for public schools.***	***Done,*** under Budget 2002. The province now provides PST refunds on purchases by Parent Advisory Councils.
✔ ***Guarantee that parents of students attending schools are entitled to volunteer their services, provided it does not result in the displacement of existing staff services.***	***Done.*** The *School (Protection of Parent Volunteers) Amendment Act* was passed in August 2001.
✔ ***Improve school accreditations.***	***Done.*** Amendments to the *School Act* passed in May 2002 create a new accountability cycle – including new accountability contracts with districts – which requires each school, district and the Ministry to review performance measures, and develop goals and strategies for improvement.

A New Era of **Advanced Education:**

✔ ***Establish a "Leading Edge Endowment Fund," based on a cost-sharing partnership with the private sector, to establish 20 permanent BC Leadership Chairs across the province in the fields of medical, social, environmental and technological research.***	***Done.*** The $45 million fund has been launched, and the first chair established for spinal cord research. A $7.5-million B.C. regional innovation chairs program was launched in February 2003.

✔ ***Support the 5% tuition cut and tuition freeze and fully fund it in the current fiscal year to offset costs to post-secondary institutes.***	***Done.***
✔ ***Consult with educators, students and administrators on the hidden costs to students and institutes of previous tuition freezes that were not properly funded by government and that have reduced student access and reduced course offerings.***	***Done***. BC's public post-secondary institutions were granted autonomy over tuition fee levels in February 2002.
✔ ***Strengthen our network of colleges, institutes and on-line learning throughout the province.***	***Underway.*** The new BCcampus was launched in October 2002, to deliver one-stop access to online programs at B.C.'s post-secondary institutions.
✔ ***Increase research funding for colleges, universities and institutes.***	***Done.*** The government has allocated $900 million to increase post-secondary research and access since June 2001.
✔ ***Expand training and post-secondary programs to graduate more Care Aides, Licenced Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses.***	***Ongoing.*** The government has added 1,813 new spaces in the past three years, and the number of nurses practicing in B.C. increased by 538 in 2002.
✔ ***Develop a Rural and Remote Training Program that provides forgivable loans to BC students attending accredited nursing and medical schools who agree to practice in a rural or remote community in BC.***	***Done.*** The loan forgiveness program was established in August 2001. Loans are forgiven at a rate of 20% per year, for each year of service in rural or remote communities.
✔ ***Increase the number of medical school graduates over the next five years.***	***Underway.*** A new provincial medical school is being established, with campuses at UBC, UNBC and UVic. Medical school spaces will almost double, from 128 to 224, by 2005.
✔ ***Train more social workers to meet the critical skills shortage that has developed under the NDP.***	***Done.*** The government added 20 new post-secondary spaces in 2002-03 for social work and child protection, and another 20 in 2003-04.

A New Era of ***Health Planning:***

✔ ***Ensure that BC health care is universal, accessible, portable, comprehensive and publicly administered, consistent with the five principles of the Canada Health Act.***	***Ongoing.*** Health authorities have established three-year Health Service Plans to reform and renew patient services for each region.
✔ ***Establish provincial health standards that ensure all citizens in every part of the province are entitled to equitable, reliable, high quality health services.***	***Done.*** Province-wide standards have been established for emergency, acute care and specialty services.
✔ ***Develop performance measures that are annually audited and publicly reported for each health standard, to ensure provincial and regional health authorities are accountable for fulfilling their duties to provide the prescribed levels of patient care.***	***Done.*** Accountability contracts and measures have been established, along with three-year Health Service Plans for each authority.
✔ ***Develop a 10-year human resource plan, that properly provides for the training, recruitment and retention of physicians, nurses, specialists and other health care providers in every area of the province, and that addresses critical skills shortages and staffing levels in under-serviced areas.***	***Underway.*** As a first step, programs have been launched to expand the supply of nurses and doctors. 1,813 new nurse training spaces have been created, and the number of practicing nurses has increased by 538 in 2003.

✔ ***Develop a Hospital Facilities Plan, that identifies each health region's key capital requirements and funding priorities.***	***Underway.*** As a first step, health authorities are launching a number of capital improvements, including new Operating Rooms in Surrey, Kelowna and Vernon, and new facilities will be established in Vancouver and Abbotsford.
✔ ***Develop an Intermediate and Long-Term Care Facilities Plan, that addresses the needs of our aging population and frees up existing acute care beds.***	***Underway.*** As a first step, the government established Independent Living BC in April 2002, to develop 3,500 new independent housing and assisted living units for seniors.
✔ ***Develop a Medical Machinery and Equipment Plan that ensures existing medical diagnostic and care equipment is adequately staffed, fully utilized and properly maintained, and that provides for future investments in new equipment and technologies.***	***Underway.*** As first steps, 25 new kidney dialysis centers are being established across the province, new defibrillators have been installed on all ambulances, and new CT scanner and MRI machines have been installed in a number of hospitals across BC, including Kelowna, Victoria and Nanaimo.
✔ ***Develop a comprehensive Technology Plan to assist health care professionals in delivering faster, more effective treatment to patients through new information technology and telemedicine.***	***Underway.*** As a first step, the government is funding $15 million in tele-health programs across B.C., together with federal and local partners, including the new BC Tele-health Project launched in February. The programs provide emergency and trauma, pediatric, maternity and mental health services for 30 communities.
✔ ***Establish a Rural and Remote Health Initiative to ensure all families get the care they need, where they live, when they need it.***	***Underway.*** New health authorities have been created to improve regional services, training spaces expanded, and forgivable loans implemented for students who go on to practice in rural communities. $58.5-million has been provided for incentives and benefits to attract doctors to rural practices.
✔ ***Introduce a Rural and Remote Training Support program that provides financial and travel assistance to health care providers who want to update or upgrade their skills and training.***	***Underway.*** The government's 2001 Nursing Strategy provided 315 nurses with specialty training in critical and emergency care, and $30 million has been added to the B.C. Ambulance Service for paramedic upgrades.

A New Era of ***Health Quality:***

✔ ***Maintain this year's overall $9.3 billion budget for health.***	***Done.***
✔ ***Increase future health care funding as economic growth increases government revenues.***	***Done.*** Health spending has increased by $1.1 billion, to $10.4 billion.
✔ ***Work with front-line health care professionals to act on their ideas for maximizing the value to patients of every health dollar spent.***	***Ongoing.*** The Dialogue on Health in October 2001 brought together 140 professionals, administrators, and other experts. The Legislature's Select Standing Committee on Health held hearings in 10 communities, and received 700 submissions, for its December 2001 report on health care renewal.
✔ ***Provide health regions and hospitals with 3-year rolling funding commitments (updated annually), to enable them to plan and act with certainty.***	***Done.*** Three-year rolling funding commitments were provided with Budget 2002 in February.
✔ ***Fully fund and implement the $125 million mental health initiative.***	***Done.*** The government is implementing a $263 million mental health commitment, including the $125 million mental health plan and $138 million for capital and facilities.
✔ ***Fund health regions at a level necessary to meet the needs of the people who live there, regardless of where a service is provided.***	***Done.*** Funding for health authorities increased in Budget 2002 by 7.4%.

✔ ***Replace obsolete hospital equipment and ambulance equipment and ensure all equipment is fully utilized and properly maintained.***	***Ongoing.*** $15 million was allocated under the August 2001 Nursing Strategy for patient lifts and hospital beds, to help avoid workplace injuries. New defibrillators have now been installed on all 450 ambulances.
✔ ***Fulfill BC's obligations under the Canada Health Act to properly fund and provide access to all medically necessary services.***	***Ongoing.*** Health funding has increased by $1.1 billion.
✔ ***Focus funding on patient care, by reducing waste in the system and eliminating administrative duplication and costs from provincial government mismanagement.***	***Done.*** The number of health authorities has been reduced from 52 to six, to achieve greater efficiency. Ministry administrative costs are being reduced by 43%, so those resources can be redirected to patients.

A New Era for ***Health Professionals:***

✔ ***Provide assistance and opportunities to help nurses develop the specialized skills needed in intensive care units, emergency rooms and operating rooms.***	***Ongoing.*** The government's nursing strategy helped B.C. gain 538 new practicing nurses in 2002. It has also provided 315 nurses with specialty training in critical and emergency care, and helped nurses on workers' compensation and long-term disability return to work.
✔ ***Increase training spaces and recruitment of foreign-trained nurses and physicians.***	***Ongoing.*** To date, letters of offer have been made to over 100 foreign-trained nurses.
✔ ***Launch a massive recruitment drive to bring non-practicing RNs and LPNs back into our health care system.***	***Underway.*** The government's nursing strategy helped B.C. gain 538 new practicing nurses in 2002.
✔ ***Increase locum support to relieve pressure and reduce workloads, to enhance health care professionals' quality of life.***	***Done.*** Funding increased by 50% in 2002-03, from $833,000 to $1.25 million.
✔ ***Increase the number of residency positions in BC's hospitals in the next five years.***	***Ongoing.*** Government has introduced a $134-million Life Sciences Initiative. It will almost double the number of B.C. medical school spaces, from 128 to 224, by 2005, and will open up new residency positions in B.C. hospitals, outside the Lower Mainland.
✔ ***Give ambulance attendants better access to training and better life-support and communications equipment needed to capitalize on those skills.***	***Done.*** $30 million was allocated in May 2002 for ambulance services, including upgrading 1,300 rural paramedics to Paramedic 1 level. New defibrillators have been installed on all 450 ambulances – $780,000 was spent in 2001-02.

A New Era of ***Health Services:***

✔ ***Ensure that appointees to regional health boards are representative of their communities' needs and accountable for their performance in meeting provincial health standards.***	***Done.*** Six new health authorities have been established, new boards appointed, and new accountability contracts and measures established.
✔ ***Pressure the federal government to restore all of the health care funding withdrawn through budget cuts.***	***Ongoing.*** At meetings in August 2001 and January 2002, chaired by Premier Campbell, Premiers called on the federal government to restore its share of overall health spending from 14% to 18%. The provinces have established the Premiers' Council on Canadian Health Awareness, to improve public access to health care information.
✔ ***Work with non-profit societies to build and operate an additional 5,000 new intermediate and long term care beds by 2006.***	***Underway.*** As a first step, Independent Living BC was established in May 2002 to develop 3,500 independent living units with support services across the province.

✔ ***Provide expanded home care and palliative care services to assist chronically and terminally ill patients with supportive home environments, as an option to institutional care.***	***Ongoing.*** The government has introduced a new Palliative Care Benefits Program to support seniors and other individuals who are terminally ill by providing medication, medical supplies and equipment, at no charge.
✔ ***Increase technology funding and digital infrastructure support to facilitate tele-health options that will expedite and improve treatments, and reduce travel requirements for Northern and rural residents.***	***Underway.*** The government is funding $15 million in tele-health programs across B.C., including the new BC Tele-health Project launched in February. The programs provide emergency and trauma, pediatric, maternity and mental health services for 30 communities.
✔ ***Ensure that patients living at home in palliative or long term care are entitled to the same pharmaceutical benefits as they would have if they were in a hospital.***	***Underway.*** As part of this commitment, the government has introduced a new Palliative Care Benefits program to provide terminally ill patients in their homes with medication, medical supplies and equipment at no charge.
✔ ***Support community services volunteers and repeal the NDP legislation that allowed government to expropriate community health facilities without compensation.***	***Done.*** The section of the *Health Authorities Act* allowing assets to be seized without compensation was repealed in August 2001.
✔ ***Protect current funding and existing levels of access to abortion services throughout the province, as a matter of confidence in government.***	***Done.*** Funding and access to abortion services has been maintained.
✔ ***Intensify efforts to promote wellness and preventative care through better education, dietary habits and physical activity.***	***Ongoing.*** Under its Picture of Health vision, government has launched a wellness and prevention initiative. Included in this, we've introduced Action Schools! BC to assist elementary schools address student physical activity levels and lifestyles, and we've formed the Provincial Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance to strengthen chronic disease support and prevention.
✔ ***Double the Physical Fitness and Amateur Sports Fund to $44 million, to promote physical fitness and participation in amateur sport.***	***Done.*** Funding has been increased to double the fund over four years.
✔ ***Enhance preventative drug and alcohol efforts, such as addiction counselling for new mothers and the reduction of fetal alcohol syndrome.***	***Ongoing.*** The government has joined the Prairie Northern Pacific Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Partnership, and has added $20 million in 2002-03 for early childhood and family development, including FAS programs.
✔ ***Work to minimize interjurisdictional overlaps that are adding confusion and costs to health care delivery.***	***Done.*** The number of health authorities has been reduced from 52 to six, to provide greater efficiency and coordination within regions.
✔ ***Work with doctors, pharmacists and others to find a cost-effective alternative to reference-based pricing.***	***Ongoing.*** The government has accepted the recommendations of an independent panel, released in December 2002, to conduct a comprehensive review of Pharmacare, and to work with pharmaceutical companies in identifying alternatives.
✔ ***Provide better home support and home care services.***	***Ongoing.*** To ensure continued improvement in the quality of home care provided, the government has implemented mandated rigorous assessments that health authorities must conduct for every home care client, as part of their performance contracts.

A New Era for **Children & Families:**

✔ ***Stop the endless bureaucratic restructuring that has drained resources from children and family services.***	***Underway.*** A three-year Ministry Service Plan has been established to provide certainty, and regional authorities are being created to improve front-line community service delivery.

✔ ***Increase emphasis on early childhood intervention programs for families with special needs children.***	***Done.*** The government has increased funding for early childhood and family development by $20 million in 2002/03 and launched the Children First learning initiatives in 17 B.C. communities that offer educational, physical and social support, which helps identify children at risk and prevent crises before they reach school age.
✔ ***Target child care funding to help parents who need it most.***	***Done.*** The government's new child care strategy, released in November 2002, increases the number of funded child care spaces from 45,000 to 70,000.
✔ ***Focus on early identification of at-risk children, and measures aimed at preventing crisis situations before they arise.***	***Done.*** The government has increased funding for early childhood and family development by $20 million in 2002/03 and directed $10 million towards early childhood development partnerships with groups like the United Way and the Savings and Credit Unions of B.C. Also $1.4 million is being invested to create or enhance 122 family resource centers to help parents with young children.
✔ ***Increase child care choices for parents by encouraging the expansion of safe, affordable child care spaces.***	***Done.*** The government's new child care strategy, released in November 2002, increases the number of funded child care spaces from 45,000 to 70,000.
✔ ***Stop the expansion of gambling that has increased gambling addiction and put new strains on families.***	***Done.*** Cabinet approved a policy in January 2002 to issue no new licences for casino gaming tables or slot machines, except those required to honour existing legal obligations.
✔ ***Work with foster parents to help them improve care and placements of foster children.***	***Ongoing.*** In consultation with the B.C. Federation of Foster Parents, the government has developed a new regional support structure to help foster parents improve care and placement of foster children. This new regional model will more effectively provide information, support and personal contact for foster parents.
✔ ***Enhance training, resources and authority for front-line social workers to properly protect children at risk and improve services to families.***	***Done.*** 20 new post-secondary spaces were added this year for social work and child protection. The number of front-line child protection workers has increased 24%, from 804 to 993. The *Child, Family and Community Service Amendment Act* also expands options available for ministry workers, by allowing children to be placed in the custody of extended family members.

A New Era for ***First Nations:***

✔ ***Give all British Columbians a say on the principles that should guide BC's approach to treaty negotiations, through a one-time, province-wide referendum, within our first year.***	***Done.*** The referendum was completed in May 2002.
✔ ***Ask an all-party committee of the Legislature to consult with British Columbians, including First Nations, to draft the referendum questions.***	***Done.*** The Select Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs conducted hearings in 15 communities last fall, and received 482 oral and written submissions.
✔ ***Increase efforts to protect and promote aboriginal languages.***	***Underway.*** $1 million in increased funding is being provided under the doubled First Citizens' Fund.
✔ ***Fast-track treaty talks, to conclude fair treaty settlements.***	***Ongoing.*** Based on the publicly-endorsed principles for treaty negotiations, instructions have been issued to all negotiators to identify opportunities for expediting agreements, and a new Provincial Policy for Consultation with First Nations has been established to advance consultation, accommodation and revenue sharing.

✔ ***Offer to negotiate a delegated, municipal-style of self-government with any First Nation that wants to move beyond the failed Indian Act.***	***Ongoing.*** A new framework for negotiation of self-government arrangements was presented in open Cabinet in November 2002.
✔ ***Increase program funding, together with the federal government, to solve urban challenges and build capacity.***	***Done.*** A $40 million Economic Measures Fund has been established, providing $10 million annually, to support economic development projects involving First Nations.
✔ ***Double the First Citizens' Fund to $72 million to support native friendship centers, student bursaries and economic development programs.***	***Done.*** Funding has been increased to double the fund over four years.
✔ ***Create a permanent First Citizens' Forum that will provide aboriginal citizens living on and off reserves a direct means to communicate with government about their priorities and ideas to materially improve their quality of life today.***	***Done.*** The first meeting was held in October 2002.
✔ ***Devote special attention and resources to addressing the challenges and needs of aboriginal women and youth, and to helping aboriginal families bridge the "digital divide."***	***Ongoing.*** The government has signed a memorandum of understanding in September 2002 to provide First Nations greater independence in caring for children in need, provided $180,000 to improve child care services for First Nations, added $145,000 to establish a provincial adviser for aboriginal infant development, and provided $1.3 million for aboriginal post-secondary programs.
✔ ***Introduce a legislative framework for legally respecting aboriginal rights protected under the Constitution in the absence of treaties.***	***Underway.*** As committed in the 2003 Throne Speech, the government will build on its new Provincial Policy for Consultation with First Nations to develop a legislative framework, has launched initiatives like revenue-sharing arrangements in forestry, to ensure aboriginal rights are protected.

A New Era of **Public Service:**

✔ ***Hold open Cabinet meetings at least once a month that are televised and broadcast live on the Internet.***	***Done.*** To date, 21 open Cabinet meetings have been held.
✔ ***Give all government MLAs a meaningful new role in policy development and service planning through a new system of Cabinet decision-making.***	***Done.*** New Government Caucus Committees have been established, to review policies, programs and legislation. Private Members have also been appointed to committees of Cabinet.
✔ ***Give all MLAs and citizens a better voice in government through active legislative committees.***	***Done.*** The Select Standing Committees on Health, Education and Aboriginal Affairs have conducted public hearings across the province, and tabled findings to the Legislature.
✔ ***Repeal the NDP "gag law" that restricts third-party advertising during election campaigns.***	***Done,*** under the *Election Statutes Amendment Act*, passed October 2002.
✔ ***Amend the Election Act to eliminate loopholes on disclosures of financial contributions to parties and to include donations of labour.***	***Done,*** under the *Election Statutes Amendment Act*, passed October 2002.
✔ ***Introduce free votes in the Legislature, to allow all MLAs to vote freely on behalf of their constituents on matters not specifically identified as a vote of confidence.***	***Done.***

✔ ***Appoint a Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform to assess all possible models for electing the MLAs, including preferential ballots, proportional representation, and our current electoral system.***	***Underway.*** Motions were tabled in the Legislature in April 2003, establishing terms of reference to govern the Assembly, and creating a special committee to evaluate and recommend the government's nominee for chair.
✔ ***Give the Citizens' Assembly a mandate to hold public hearings throughout BC, and if it recommends changes to the current electoral system, that option will be put to a province-wide referendum.***	***Underway.***
✔ ***Outlaw donations from charities to political parties.***	***Done,*** under the *Election Statutes Amendment Act*, passed October 2002.

A New Era of **Public Safety:**

✔ ***Ensure all laws are equally applied and enforced for all British Columbians.***	***Ongoing.***
✔ ***Pressure the federal government to fulfill its contractual obligation to fully fill all RCMP vacancies.***	***Done.*** Vacancies have been filled.
✔ ***Hold the line on court fees, to ensure that everyone has affordable access to our justice system.***	***Done.*** Court fees have not increased.
✔ ***Fight child prostitution and youth crime with legislation aimed at providing greater protection to children at risk of exploitation and greater parental responsibility for children who commit property crimes.***	***Underway.*** The *Parental Responsibility Act* was passed in August 2001. A discussion paper on proposed Safe Care legislation and services for commercially sexually exploited youth will be released in on October, 2003, followed by a public consultation process.
✔ ***Vigorously defend the Crown's ownership of provincial land and resources.***	***Ongoing.*** The government is working with the federal government on both the development of offshore oil and gas, and on the Kyoto Protocol implementation plan, to ensure the province receives full credit for its forest carbon sinks.
✔ ***Continue to pressure the federal government to scrap mandatory gun registration and put those resources into fighting crime.***	***Done.*** The province is no longer administering the registry and has notified the federal government on several occasions about its concerns with the program.

A New Era of **Equality:**

✔ ***Stand up for the equality of all Canadians and all provinces under the Canadian Constitution.***	***Ongoing.*** The government is pressing the government to ensure that no jurisdiction bears an unfair burden under the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, and has aggressively pursued equitable funding arrangements under the First Ministers' Health Accord.
✔ ***Fight for BC's fair share of federal tax dollars through a more equitable distribution of federal government transfer payments and contracts.***	***Ongoing.*** At meetings in August 2001 and January 2002, chaired by Premier Campbell, Canada's Premiers unanimously called for immediate removal of the equalization ceiling, and development of strengthened and fairer equalization formula.
✔ ***Work with other provinces to negotiate a more equitable federal equalization program that is consistent with the Constitution.***	***Ongoing.*** At meetings in August 2001 and January 2002, chaired by Premier Campbell, Canada's Premiers unanimously called for immediate removal of the equalization ceiling, and development of strengthened and fairer equalization formula.

✔ ***Push to eliminate interprovincial trade barriers.***	***Done.*** As of March 2002, B.C. is now fully compliant with the Agreement on Internal Trade.
✔ ***Ensure that our rural communities have the health and education services they need.***	***Ongoing.*** A new education funding formula, implemented in March 2002, provides supplementary grants for districts with unique student needs, enrolment decline and unique geographic factors. Rural health initiatives include expanded medical and nursing education spaces, new health authorities to improve regional services, and forgivable student loans for medical and nursing graduates who practice in rural communities.
✔ ***Work to ensure that all aboriginal governments have the same legal status in BC as they do in every other province.***	***Ongoing.*** The new publicly endorsed principles for treaty negotiations ensure aboriginal governments in B.C. have the same legal status as in other provinces.
✔ ***Invite all Members of the BC Legislature and all BC Members of Parliament to hold annual joint conferences aimed at publicly identifying and overcoming issues of regional alienation within Canada and BC.***	***Done.*** The first Provincial Congress was held in February 2002.
✔ ***Ensure all British Columbians have equal access to legal representation and justice.***	***Ongoing.*** Government has restructured the Legal Services, introduced circuit courts and set up a 24-hour call centre all to give stability to the legal aid system and make sure legal aid is available to British Columbians who need it most